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DAN SMOOT

TOWARD A ROBOT SOCIETY

How far have we already gone in experimenting with mind-control drugs for children? No one really knows. A national spot check discloses widely varying attitudes and practices.(1)

In the April, 1970, *Reader's Digest*, Fred Warshofsky tells about one experiment on 52 fifth and sixth graders in a Baltimore elementary school. All were poor learners, with behavior problems. Each day, half the children were given a drug known to have a powerfully stimulating effect on the central nervous system. The others were given sugar pills, but all 52 children thought they were getting the same "smart pills." After a month, the two groups were switched. Children in the group receiving the drug always showed significant improvement in behavior, ability to concentrate, and desire to learn.

In San Francisco, parental resistance seems to have restricted drug therapy in schools. There, not more than 100 children (out of a total elementary school enrollment of 49,000) have been given any kind of drugs. Dr. Margaret Miller, medical consultant to the San Francisco unified school district, says:

"There have been a few cases in which we and the family doctor felt drugs might be useful. But the families, especially those with older teenage children still at home, apparently are subject to what we might call the 'drug scare.'"(1)

Dr. Henry Burks, director of the Fort Worth child clinic, says doctors there have been giving children amphetamines for a long time. But apparently Fort Worth also has a "drug scare." Dr. Burks, bothered about the attitude of some pharmacists, remarks:

"He [the pharmacist] will say to the mother, 'My God, he's putting your boy on speed.' Naturally, this alarms the mother."(1)

Dr. Irving Abrams, medical director for Chicago public schools, says the use of drugs began there more than ten years ago, and "is increasing all the time as doctors become more and more tuned in to the relationship between a student's performance in school and his health problem."(1)

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In Newark, New Jersey, the school board refused to recommend the use of amphetamines or Ritalin. Dr. Michael L. Cabot, assistant superintendent of Newark schools, says:

"I don't believe we know enough about their effect to experiment. People's lives are too important."[1]

Dr. Arthur Nickerson (psychiatrist and consultant to the Long Beach, California, public schools) is among those who acknowledge that the use of amphetamines for emotionally-disturbed youngsters may be harmful.[2]

Despite this, however (and despite the fact that *no one knows* what the behavior-modification drugs actually do to children), Dr. Nickerson and many others recommend use of the drugs because "empirically . . . they work," in many cases, to calm hyper-active children.[2]

How far are we likely to venture into this dangerous field of mind control?

The PTA Magazine, in its April and May, 1969, issues, ran two articles under the title "Psychoneurobiochemeducation." The articles were adapted from a speech which Dr. David Krech made to a meeting of the American Association of School Administrators. Dr. Krech, a professor of psychology at the University of California in Berkeley, has spent years studying the mental processes of rats, experimenting with drugs, electric shock, and other means of changing learning abilities, altering mentalities.

Dr. Krech discusses fascinating theories and discoveries in his field. He tells, for example, about laboratory researchers who claim they can train a rat, take an extract from its brain, and inject this extract into an untrained rat — thus giving the recipient rat the memories of the dead donor rat.

Contemplating the possible consequences of the same kind of brain research on people, Dr. Krech sees in it both wondrous promise and monstrous threat:

"If it should turn out that what is true for the rat brain is also true for the human brain, the wondrous promises of a glorious future or the monstrous threat of a Huxleian Brave New World are fairly self-evident."

Dr. Krech also discusses the contemporary trend toward experimenting in education, with theories and conclusions developed by rat-brain research. He says:

"The world took little note and cared even less about our researches on how rats learned to thread their way through mazes. Occasionally, of course, a misguided educator would . . . try to fashion an educational psychology out of our . . . studies.

"Classroom teachers, however . . . would quickly see through such nonsense, and . . . turn to the serious and difficult task of teaching children, unencumbered and unaided by our research and theory.

"But time no longer is. Our psychology — especially when combined with educational practice and theory — must now be listed among the powerful, and even perhaps, the dangerous sciences."

Dr. Krech is quoted on the same subject in Fred Warshofsky's April, 1970, *Reader's Digest* article, "Mind Research: The Promise And The Peril":

"Through a combination of psychology and chemistry we may be able to raise verbal abilities in some, arithmetical reasoning in others, artistic abilities in still others.

"Who gets what raised? He who has the price of a pill? And who decides for whom? The parent, the huckster, the school board? On what basis do we make the decision?"

Though troubled about the "monstrous threat" inherent in mind-research on children (and other human beings), Dr. Krech is basically optimistic. He hopes "the biochemist, neurologist, psychologist, and educator will eventually add to the intellectual stature of man" until such research can be conducted and applied wisely and beneficially.

We can find another harbinger of things to come in *Today's Education*, official magazine of

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the National Education Association (NEA). The NEA is a powerful and ruthless pressure group. On public schools, the NEA has immeasurable influence in all matters, from encouraging illegal teacher strikes to lobbying for court decisions and legislation that reflect the sociological, political, and economic views of NEA managers. When the NEA magazine publishes a major article dealing with education, we should all take heed. One such article is "Forecast for the 70's," in the January, 1969, issue of *Today's Education*, written by Harold G. Shane and June Grant Shane, who are professors of education at Indiana University. The Shanes began research for the piece in the mid-1960's. Here are excerpts from it:

"Current writings clearly indicate that education and schools . . . will change drastically during the 1970's, and will be modified almost beyond recognition by the end of the century. . . . Here . . . as many scholars see it, are some of the possible designs of educational futures in the seventies . . . .

"Educators will assume a formal responsibility for children when they reach the age of two . . . .

"Biochemical and psychological mediation of learning is likely to increase. New drama will play on the educational stage as drugs are introduced experimentally to improve in the learner such qualities as personality, concentration, and memory. The application of biochemical research findings, heretofore centered in infra-human subjects, such as fish, could be a source of conspicuous controversy when children become the objects of experimentation . . . .

"Few are likely to make an issue of efforts to improve educational opportunities for the deprived child. However, there could be a tinderbox quality to the introduction of mandatory foster homes and 'boarding schools' for children between the ages of two and three whose home environment was felt to have a malignant influence. Decisions of the 1970's in these areas could have far-reaching social consequences . . . .

"The roles and responsibilities of teachers will alter throughout the next decade. Futurethink suggests that between 1970 and 1980 a number of new assignments and specialties will materialize if present trends continue.

"For one thing, the basic role of the teacher will change noticeably. Ten years hence it should be more accurate to term him a 'learning clinician.' This title is intended to convey the idea that schools are becoming 'clinics' whose purpose is to provide individualized psychosocial 'treatment' for the student . . . .

"Ten years from now, faculties will include —*culture analysts . . . . media specialists . . . . information-input specialists . . . . curriculum-input specialists . . . . biochemical therapist/pharmacists*, whose services increase as biochemical therapy and memory improvement chemicals are introduced more widely . . . .

"Access to more information will carry us toward an international consensus as to what is desirable in family life, art, recreation, education, diet, economic policies, and government."

Note that this NEA article was published in January, 1969. In April, 1969, the Hawaii superintendent of schools distributed to members of the Hawaii board of education a massive *Master Plan for Public Education In Hawaii* — the stated purpose of the plan being "first to identify the broadscale changes that should occur in the educational system, and second, to set forth the appropriate steps to bring about such changes."[3]

Compare the following excerpts from the Hawaii Master Plan, with the above excerpts from the NEA magazine article:

"Recent discoveries from the field of biochemistry suggest that there already exists a fairly extensive class of drugs to improve learning in lower animals. These drugs can fortify and extend in different ways the several different aspects of learning such as persistence, attentiveness, immediate memory, and long-term memory . . . .

"The application of biochemical findings,

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heretofore centered in lower forms of animal life, will be a source of conspicuous controversy when children become the objects of such experimentation.

"Schools will inevitably be swept into a whole new area of collaboration in research with biochemists and psychologists to improve learning. The immediate and long-term impact on teaching as well as on learning and the ethical and moral consequences of extensive use of chemicals to assist in the learning process must be studied extensively . . . .

"The roles and responsibilities of teachers will change noticeably in the years ahead. By 1985 it should be more accurate to term a teacher a 'learning clinician' for the schools will be 'clinics' whose purpose is to provide individualized educational and psychosocial 'services' to the student . . . .

"School faculties will include . . . information-input specialists . . . curriculum-input specialists . . . . "[3]

Obviously, this educationist jargon has a common source; and it all points in the same direction: toward controlled one-world socialism.

In December, 1969, Dr. Arnold Hutschnecker, a psychiatrist who was consultant to the National Commission on the Causes and Prevention of Violence, sent President Nixon a memorandum recommending compulsory psychological tests for all 6-to-8-year-old U.S. children, to determine their future potential for criminal behavior, and to weed out the potentially dangerous. He suggested day-care centers for pre-schoolers, after-school centers for older children — and camps with supervised group activities for others. "The more disturbed, the more angry, rebellious, undisciplined and disruptive boys . . . should be given aptitude tests to determine areas of interest which should be carefully encouraged," Dr. Hutschnecker said, adding:

"There are Pavlovian methods which I have seen effectively used in the Soviet Union."[4]

The President sent Hutschnecker's memorandum to the Department of HEW asking advice on "setting up pilot projects embodying some of these approaches."[4]

HEW eventually announced that it had no interest in the Hutschnecker proposals. On April 17, 1970, the White House announced that the President had no further interest in them.[4]

But the Hutschnecker idea has been planted in high places, and will not die. When the universal, compulsory psychotherapy he recommends is combined with the drug therapy already being used and expanded — what *will* be the role of public schools in the future? Will they be clinics for "psychosocial" research on children, or animal farms for producing a robot society?

FOOTNOTES

(1) *National Observer*, July 6, 1970

(2) *Press-Telegram*, Long Beach, California, July 23, 1970

(3) *Master Plan For Public Education In Hawaii*, published in mimeograph (as DRAFT: LIMITED DISTRIBUTION, *For Discussion Only*) by Department of Education, State of Hawaii, April, 1969

(4) San Francisco *Chronicle*, April 6, 7, 1970; Washington *Evening Star*, April 6, 1970; Martin Gross column, April 25, 1970

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